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Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization

Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs and *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present progress report has been prepared pursuant to paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 53/106 of 8 December 1998, in which the Assembly took note of subparagraphs (*a*), (*b*), (*c*), (*d*) and (*f*) of paragraph 32 of the 1998 report of the Secretary-General (A/53/386) and requested him to continue to undertake efforts to identify resources to prepare supplements to the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* and the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* and, in particular, to complete the work required to issue the two remaining volumes of Supplement No. 5 to the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* and to submit a progress report on the matter to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.

2. In paragraph 32 of his 1998 report, the Secretary-General called on the Assembly, *inter alia*, to:

(a) Take note of the difficulties faced by the Secretariat in bringing, on the basis of existing resources, the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* and *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* up to date in a sustained manner;

(b) Note that volumes III (Articles 55-72) and IV (Articles 73-91) of Supplement No. 5 (covering the years 1970 to 1978) to the *Repertory* will be completed by the end of 1999, subject to the continued availability of resources to do so;

(c) Note that the *Repertoire* Supplement covering the period 1985-1988 will be published before the end of the biennium 1998-1999 and that work on the eleventh Supplement, covering the period 1989-1992, is scheduled for completion by the end of 2001;

(d) Note that, upon completion of the eleventh Supplement, there will still be a backlog of the *Repertoire* for the period 1993 to date. As outlined with respect to the *Repertory*, it will be necessary to include adequate resources in the programme budgets for future bienniums in order to bring the *Repertoire* up to date;

...

(f) Take note that *Repertory*-related tasks will be included as distinct activities within relevant sections of future programme budgets of the Organization, starting with the biennium 2000-2001.

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II. *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*

A. Steps undertaken by the Secretariat to expedite the preparation of Supplements to the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*

1. Interdepartmental Committee on Charter Repertory

3. Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 53/106, the Interdepartmental Committee on Charter Repertory[1] met on four occasions, *inter alia*, to review the status of the preparation of volumes III and IV of Supplement No. 5, as well as of volume VI of Supplement No. 6; to consider resource requirements for the preparation of the *Repertory* during 1999; to establish the work programme for the 2000-2001 biennium; and to discuss updating the Manual for the Preparation of the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*.

4. The Committee also took note of the establishment of the Roster of *Repertory* Consultants, located in the Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs, which is intended to assist participating Secretariat units in identifying suitable candidates to undertake *Repertory*-related work.

(a) Review Committee of the Interdepartmental Committee on Charter Repertory

5. During the period under review, the Review Committee of the Interdepartmental Committee on Charter Repertory, consisting of the Office of Legal Affairs and the Department of Political Affairs was convened to review volume VI of Supplement No. 6. The Review Committee approved the volume for publication. Such approval was subsequently communicated to the Interdepartmental Committee.

(b) Redistribution of *Repertory* studies allocated to Secretariat units

6. In 1998, the allocation of *Repertory* studies to various Secretariat units was modified as a result of the restructuring of the Secretariat (A/53/386, para. 10). In 1999, the Interdepartmental Committee on Charter Repertory amended the allocation of studies further as follows: the responsibility for the preparation of Article 8 (in volume I) for the period up to and including 1996 lies with the Department of Management (Office of Human Resources Management) and for the period covering 1997 onwards, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs will undertake the *Repertory* studies in question.

(c) Updating the Manual for the Preparation of the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*

7. During 1999, the Interdepartmental Committee on Charter Repertory undertook a preliminary consideration of the feasibility of updating the Manual for the Preparation of the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*. The current Manual was last updated in October 1980 and contains several directives that are out of date. This was found to be particularly so in the case of the directives relating to the preparation of draft studies and the procedures for the submission of draft studies, which are no longer adequate in the light of the various amendments to the submission and review procedure approved by the Committee in 1997. In this regard, in 1999, the Office of Legal Affairs prepared the Draft Guidelines on the Preparation and Submission of *Repertory* Draft Studies, with a view to revising parts of the Manual so as to clarify the functions of the Secretariat units involved, including the coordinating departments, and to update the existing submission procedures accordingly.

8. The Interdepartmental Committee on Charter Repertory took note of the Draft Guidelines and agreed to review them next year on the basis of the experience of 1999 in connection with the preparation and submission of draft studies for volumes III and IV of Supplement No. 5. It is envisaged that the proposed guidelines would eventually be incorporated into the revised Manual, which could include a new presentation reflecting the more decentralized approach to preparing *Repertory* studies, as well as bring the editorial directives into line with current standards.

2. Training seminars on preparing the *Repertory*, conducted by the Office of Legal Affairs

9. Following requests from several participating Secretariat units, the Office of Legal Affairs, in its capacity as overall coordinator for the preparation of the *Repertory*, conducted a second series of training seminars on the preparation of the *Repertory*. The seminars, held from 9 to 12 February 1999, were open to all participating Secretariat units and focused on research and writing techniques. Further seminars will be held as required.

3. Recourse to interns

10. The utilization of interns in the research and compilation of data for the preparation of draft *Repertory* studies continued to be a key feature of the work on the *Repertory* during 1999. While every attempt is made to select the most suitable candidates, the overall contribution of interns to the preparation of *Repertory* studies continues to be constrained by the necessary training and oversight responsibilities imposed on supervisors. Furthermore, as was noted in the 1998 report (A/53/386, para. 13), the two-month time limit placed on the period of service of interns continues to restrict their ability to make a substantial contribution to the studies in question. The same considerations outlined in that report continue to apply.

4. Redeployment of financial resources for the preparation of the *Repertory*

11. The General Assembly, in its resolution 53/106, took note of the steps proposed by the Secretary-General in his 1998 report and requested him to continue to undertake efforts to identify resources to prepare supplements to the *Repertory*, with the understanding that the costs of preparation of the two remaining volumes of Supplement No. 5 to the *Repertory* would be covered by resources available within the programme budget for 1998-1999. Pursuant to that request, resources have been identified. The status of preparation of the *Repertory* during the biennium 1998-1999 appears in section B below.

B. Status of the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*

1. Preparation of volumes referred to in paragraph 59 (b) of the 1997 report of the Secretary-General

12. It is recalled that in the 1997 report of the Secretary-General (A/52/317 and Corr.1, para. 59 (b)) it was anticipated that volumes III (Articles 55-72) and IV (Articles 73-91) of Supplement No. 5 to the *Repertory* (covering the period 1970-1978) would be completed by the end of 1999 and that volume VI (Articles 92-105 and 108-111) of Supplement No. 6 (covering the period 1979-1984) was to be completed by mid-1998.

13. With regard to volume III of Supplement No. 5, significant progress was made by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which is also the coordinating department, as well as by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services. The studies on the articles covered by these departments are in the final stages of completion and some will be submitted shortly to the Review Committee. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has also progressed considerably in its work on its respective articles.

14. With regard to volume IV of Supplement No. 5, the studies in question have either been completed by the Department of Political Affairs or are in the final stages of completion, and will be submitted shortly to the Review Committee.

15. In view of the above, all studies of volumes III and IV of Supplement No. 5 could be completed by the end of 1999, as envisaged by the Secretary-General. Taking into account the editing and printing process requirements, these volumes are expected to be published in 2000. Moreover, indexing of Supplement No. 5 will be undertaken by the Department of Public Information in 2000 once volumes III and IV have been published and the necessary resources have been requested under the Department's proposed programme budget for 2000-2001.

16. Volume VI of Supplement No. 6 was published in English in August 1999. Measures are being taken to arrange for the translation of that volume into French and Spanish.

2. Preparation of further volumes of the *Repertory*

17. Since work is almost completed on the three priority volumes mentioned in section A above, volumes I to V of Supplement No. 6 should be prepared next (A/52/317, para. 16). Work on volumes I (Articles 1-8) and II (Articles 9-22) has already begun and will continue in a sustained manner. With regard to volume V (Articles 73-91), most of the substantial work has been completed, subject to several minor revisions and modifications. With regard to volumes III (Articles 23-54, 106, 107) and IV (Articles 55-72), work will begin during 2000-2001. It is not possible at the current stage to make any definite projections since work has not started on the relevant Articles.

18. In view of the above, it is anticipated that volumes I, II and V of Supplement No. 6 will be completed during the next biennium (2000-2001), provided that the level of resources proposed in the 2000-2001 budget is approved. Volumes III and IV could be completed in the 2002-2003 biennium. It has not been possible to establish a stricter timetable for the volumes in Supplement No. 6.

19. It should be further noted that those Secretariat units which have already completed their contribution to Supplement No. 6 may start work on Supplement No. 7,

covering the period from 1 January 1985 to 31 December 1988.

C. Assessment of action required

1. Inclusion of the *Repertory* within the proposed programme budgets for future bienniums

20. As already noted in the report of the Secretary-General for 1998, work on further volumes of Supplement No. 6 to the *Repertory*, and on subsequent Supplements, will continue to the extent allowed by the resources placed at the disposal of the relevant departments (A/53/386, paras. 23 and 25). In an effort to ensure that Secretariat units continue to assume their responsibilities for the preparation of their contributions to the *Repertory*, as part of their programme of work, *Repertory*-related tasks will in future be included, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/106, as distinct activities within relevant sections of the Secretary-General's proposed programme budgets for each biennium, with a view to ensuring that future work on the *Repertory* is supported with adequate resources.

21. In this connection, attention is drawn to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001,[2] which has been submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session for its approval.

III. *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*

A. Status of the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*

22. During the period under review, the eighth and ninth Supplements to the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*, covering, respectively, the periods 1975-1980 and 1981-1984, have been published in French. The technical editing and the typesetting of the English version of the tenth Supplement, covering the period 1985-1988, have been completed and the volume is currently being indexed and translated into French. It is scheduled for publication in English by the beginning of 2000 and in French in the second half of 2000. The Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch is now working on the eleventh Supplement, covering the period 1989-1992.

B. Resources needed to eliminate the backlog in the publication of Supplements to the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*

23. In view of the General Assembly's request that additional resources be identified to bring the *Repertoire* up to date, the medium-term staffing requirements of the Branch have been carefully reassessed, taking due account of the increase in the volume of activity of the Security Council since 1989.

24. During the 1989-1992 period, the number of meetings held and communications received by the Security Council increased by about 20 per cent compared with those of the previous four years. A provision of general temporary assistance equivalent to 48 work months has been included in the proposed programme budget for 2000-2001 for the eleventh Supplement covering this period. It is anticipated that similar resources may have to be included in the budget for 2002-2003.

25. It should be noted that the current staffing level of the Branch is much lower than in the past, when the Supplements to the *Repertoire* were published in a more timely manner.[3]

26. In the 1993-1998 period there was an even steeper rise in the activity of the Security Council, which increased by at least 70 per cent. Consequently, the preparation of the Supplement covering that period will require concerted efforts.

27. It is not anticipated that the existence of a database in which all United Nations documents from 1993 onwards can be searched electronically will reduce significantly the time required for the preparation of that Supplement. While explicit references to Charter Articles or provisional rules of procedure could be found electronically, most implicit references cannot be identified unless drafters continue to research and study all documents thoroughly.

C. Options under consideration

28. In considering the various options available to bring the *Repertoire* up to date and restore the Branch's capacity to fulfil its mission, an important element to keep in mind is that newly recruited officers require at least three months of on-the-job training by experienced supervisors before they become productive. As mentioned above in the context of the *Repertory*, interns whose period of service is limited to two months, or exceptionally three months, cannot be

expected to make a significant contribution to the work of the Branch, let alone be relied upon to eliminate the backlog.

29. Given the requirement for experience and continuity, one option which Member States may wish to consider is the provision of voluntary contributions to facilitate the timely preparation of the Supplements to the *Repertoire*. Voluntary contributions of some $1.5 million a year would be needed to eliminate the backlog in a six-year period.

30. The Secretariat is considering, in conjunction with the availability of extrabudgetary resources, the feasibility of establishing a specific training programme for junior professionals willing to acquire in-depth knowledge of the Charter and the practice of the Security Council. Such individuals would be required to work in the Branch for a minimum of one year, preferably two years. Like the current internship programme, such a programme would contribute to a better understanding of the United Nations.

IV. Conclusions

31. In the period under review, the Secretariat continued the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 52/161 and 53/106 regarding the preparation of volumes III and IV of Supplement No. 5 and volume VI of Supplement No. 6 and review of the question of the preparation of further volumes of the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*, and identified several other volumes of Supplement No. 6 to be prepared. Volume VI of Supplement No. 6 was published, in English, in August 1999 and the availability of funds for its translation into French and Spanish is being explored. Volumes III and IV of Supplement No. 5 will be completed and published in 2000. A certain delay in the implementation of the original timetable for those volumes is attributable to the lengthy and necessary administrative procedures for the allocation of existing resources in 1999. Indexing of Supplement No. 5 will also be completed in 2000. An adequate budgetary basis is in the process of being established for future work on volumes of the *Repertory*, especially as regards the remaining volumes of Supplement No. 6. Under the circumstances and subject to the availability of resources, work has started and will continue on volumes I, II and V of Supplement No. 6, which are expected to be completed in the next biennium (2000-2001). At the current stage, it is not possible to establish a stricter timetable for the remaining volumes of Supplement No. 6.

32. With respect to the *Repertoire of Practice of the Security Council*, work has continued on the preparation of the eleventh Supplement, covering the period 1989-1992. In view of the sharp increase in the activity of the Security Council during the last decade, the staffing requirements of the Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch have been carefully reassessed. The various options available to bring the *Repertoire* up to date are under consideration, including the provision of voluntary contributions and the establishment of a specific training programme for junior professionals willing to acquire in-depth knowledge of the Charter and the practice of the Security Council.

33. In the light of the above, the General Assembly may wish to:

(a) Note that volume VI of Supplement No. 6 to the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* was published in August 1999 (English version);

(b) Note that volumes III (Articles 55-72) and IV (Articles 73-91) of Supplement No. 5 to the *Repertory* will be completed and published in 2000;

(c) Note that work has started on volumes I, II and V of Supplement No. 6 to the *Repertory*, which will be completed in the next biennium (2000-2001), while work on volumes III and IV of Supplement No. 6 to the *Repertory* will begin during 2000-2001;

(d) Note that those Secretariat units which have already completed their contribution to Supplement No. 6 to the *Repertory* may start work on Supplement No. 7 to the *Repertory*;

(e) Note that *Repertory*-related tasks are included as distinct activities within the relevant section of programme budgets of the Organization, starting with the biennium 2000-2001;

(f) Note that the eighth and ninth Supplements to the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* have now been published in French and that the tenth Supplement is scheduled to be published in English by the beginning of 2000 and in French in the second half of 2000;

(g) Note that studies for the eleventh Supplement to the *Repertoire* are under preparation;

(h) Consider ways and means of eliminating the backlog in the *Repertoire*, taking into account the requirements for training, experience and continuity;

(i) Note the efforts of the Secretary-General to reduce the backlog of the Supplements to the *Repertory* and to the *Repertoire*.

Notes

[1] The Committee is composed of representatives of all Secretariat units involved in the preparation of Supplements to the *Repertory* (see annex I) and is responsible for directing and overseeing the preparation and publication of those Supplements.

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/54/6/Rev.1).

[3] A/AC.182/L.87, para. 48.

Annex I

Secretariat units bearing primary responsibility for the preparation of studies on individual provisions of the Charter of the United Nations

Office of Legal Affairs	Articles 1 (1), (3) and (4), 2 (1) to (3) and (5) to (7), 7, 13 (1) (a), 92 to 99, 102 to 105 and 108 to 111
Department of Political Affairs	Articles 1 (2), 2 (4), 3 to 6, 10, 12, 14, 16, 23 to 39,73 to 85, 87, 88 and 107
Department of Political Affairs with Department of Peacekeeping Operations	Articles 40 to 54 and 106
Department for Disarmament Affairs	Article 11
Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services	Articles 9, 15, 18, 20 to 22, 60, 61, 62 (3) and (4), 65 to 70, 72, 86, 89, 90 and 91
Department of Management	Articles 17, 19, 100 (1) and 101
Department of Management with Office of Legal Affairs	Article 100 (2)
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	Articles 8,[a] 13 (1) (b) and (2), 55 (a) and (b), 57 to 59, 62 (1), 63, 64 and 71
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Articles 13 (1) (b), 55 (c), 56 and 62 (2)
Office for Outer Space Affairs	Article 13 (1) (a)

[a] The Department of Management (Office of Human Resources Management) is responsible for the preparation of Article 8 for the period up to and including 1996. For the period 1997 onwards, that responsibility falls to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Annex II

Secretariat units responsible for the coordination of the preparation of *Repertory* volumes

Volume	*Department*
1 (Articles 1 to 8)	Office of Legal Affairs
2 (Articles 9 to 22)	Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services
3 (Articles 23 to 54, 106 and 107)	Department of Political Affairs
4 (Articles 55 to 72)	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
5 (Articles 73 to 91)	Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services
6 (Articles 92 to 105 and 108 to 111)	Office of Legal Affairs

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Review and Implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly: regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. In 1991, noting the devastation that decades of continued armed and political conflicts were wreaking on their communities and economies and following the decision taken at their seminar-workshop on confidence-building measures, security, disarmament and development in the Central African subregion, held in Yaoundé from 17 to 21 June 1991, the Governments of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) sought the assistance and support of the General Assembly to establish a mechanism for dialogue and confidence-building that would allow them to build peace and security as well as foster economic development in their region.

2. Accordingly, on 6 December 1991, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/37 B, in which it welcomed the initiative taken by the States members of ECCAS with a view to developing confidence-building measures, disarmament and development in their subregion, by, in particular, the creation, under the auspices of the United Nations, of a standing advisory committee on security questions in Central Africa. Subsequently, on 28 May 1992, the Secretary-General established the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa. Since its creation the Standing Advisory Committee has been involved in developing and promoting measures in the fields of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-building. Every year the Secretary-General is requested to submit a report on the activities of the Committee to the General Assembly.

3. In its resolution 53/78 A of 4 December 1998 on the activities of the Standing Advisory Committee, the General Assembly reaffirmed its support for efforts aimed at promoting confidence-building measures in order to ease tensions and conflicts and to further peace, stability and sustainable development in Central Africa; also reaffirmed its support for the programme of work of the Committee, requested the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to lend their support to the establishment of a subregional centre for human rights and democracy in Central Africa; and also requested him, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1197 (1998), to

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provide the necessary support to the States members of the Standing Advisory Committee in making operational the recently established early warning mechanism, to continue to provide assistance to States members of the Committee; and to report to the Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the resolution.

4. The present report is therefore submitted pursuant to resolution 53/78 A. It covers the activities undertaken by the United Nations and the Standing Advisory Committee since the submission, on 11 September 1998, of the Secretary-General's report to the Assembly at its fifty-third session (A/53/369). During the reporting period, the Secretary-General closely followed developments in the region and the activities of the Committee and supported the objective of strengthening regional confidence-building measures aimed at addressing numerous security issues faced by Central African States. At the tenth ministerial meeting of the Committee, held in Yaoundé from 26 to 30 October 1998, Cheikh-Tidiane Gaye, Director of the United Nations Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, represented the Secretary-General.

5. At the invitation of the Government of Cameroon, the Secretary-General was represented by Ibrahima Fall, Assistant Secretary-General, Department of Political Affairs, at the summit of Heads of State and Government of the countries of Central Africa held in Yaoundé on 25 and 26 February 1999. On 25 June, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) represented him at the summit of Heads of State and Government of the countries of Central Africa, held in Malabo.

6. In July, Halidou Ouedraogo, Senior Economist at the Economic Commission for Africa and Secretary of the Inter-Agency Task Force on African Recovery and Development, introduced, on behalf of the Secretary-General, a report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318) to a seminar organized by the Standing Advisory Committee in Yaoundé from 19 to 21 July. The high-level subregional seminar on the examination and prospective implementation, in the Central African region, of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General was organized pursuant to a decision taken by the Standing Advisory Committee at its tenth ministerial meeting, held in Yaoundé from 26 to 30 October 1998. Mr. Ouedraogo also delivered the Secretary-General's message to the eleventh ministerial meeting, held in Yaoundé from 21 to 23 July 1999.

7. With regard to assistance extended to the Standing Advisory Committee during the reporting period, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, recently undertook to designate, in the near future, a Human Rights Officer to assist the centre for human rights and democracy to be established by the Committee. The officer who will act as a regional consultant to the centre will be responsible for providing advisory services to the host country, Cameroon, and for setting up the Centre.

8. On 30 April, the Secretary-General met with General Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, who briefed him on developments regarding the decision of the Standing Advisory Committee to create a structure for preventing, managing and resolving conflicts in the Central African region and on progress made in efforts to establish the subregional parliament for Central Africa.

9. During the reporting period, the Secretariat continued to contribute to efforts aimed at re-establishing peace in several countries of the region torn by bloody conflicts. The Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, Berhanu Dinka, continued to play an active role in the search for peace in the Great Lakes region. In April, the Secretary-General appointed Moustapha Niasse his Special Envoy for the Peace Process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Mr. Niasse was given the task of consulting all parties to the conflict with a view to preparing a thorough analysis of the situation that would permit the United Nations to design, in collaboration with the parties concerned, an appropriate peace plan for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region. His report contributed significantly to the adoption of Security Council resolution 1258 (1999), in which the Council authorized, as security conditions permitted, the deployment of a peacekeeping mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition, Mr. Fall participated on many occasions in a number of peace talks organized by the Southern African Development Community and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Those talks resulted in the signing in Lusaka on 10 July 1999 of the ceasefire agreement on the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the States concerned. The Department of Political Affairs is currently monitoring the implementation of that agreement. It is also closely working with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1258 (1999).

II. Meetings of the Standing Advisory Committee

10. During the reporting period, member States of the Standing Advisory Committee, with the assistance of the Secretariat, continued to address the persistent threats to peace and security in their subregion with a view to promoting durable peace and sustainable development as well as preventing further turmoil in the region. They also continued to press ahead with the implementation of a number of activities begun during previous years. In addition to the meetings mentioned above, consultations and more formal meetings were held at various levels. For instance, a number of meetings were held between the chiefs of staff of the defence forces of the region regarding peacekeeping operations between the armed forces of the countries of the region. Several meetings on ways and means to stem the growing phenomenon of armed highway robberies were also held between Cameroon and Chad as well as between Cameroon and Gabon.

11. In addition to those efforts, through the Committee of the Heads of Police of Central Africa (CHPCA), member countries of the Standing Advisory Committee on many occasions took collective action to deal with the growing phenomenon of trans-border crime. CHPCA has been instrumental in harmonizing operational structures of the national central offices of the International Criminal Police Organization and in facilitating the growing exchange of information on policing. Meanwhile, member States responsible for hosting the various institutions created under the auspices of the Standing Advisory Committee continued to search for ways and means to bring to fruition the institutions they are hosting.

12. Meanwhile, at the tenth ministerial meeting, held in Yaoundé from 26 to 30 October 1998, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the member countries of the Committee, recognizing the need to establish a structure for preventing, managing and resolving conflicts within their region, recommended the convening of a summit meeting of Heads of State and Government of the subregion with a view to considering the establishment of a supreme council for the promotion of peace and the prevention, management and resolution of political crises and armed conflict in Central Africa. The Ministers also adopted the Yaoundé Declaration on Peace, Security and Development, in which they stressed the Committee's political importance as the preferred forum for dialogue concerning confidence-building, peace and security in the subregion.

13. Pursuant to the recommendation of the Ministers, President Paul Biya of the Republic of Cameroon convened a summit of Heads of State and Government of the countries of Central Africa on 25 and 26 February 1999. At the conclusion of the summit, which was held in Yaoundé, the Heads of State and Government decided to create the proposed supreme council and named it the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX). Accordingly, they instructed their Ministers for Foreign Affairs and for Defence/Armed Forces, Interior and Security to meet as soon as possible to finalize the draft terms of reference of the new subregional institution.

14. The Heads of State and Government also adopted the Yaoundé Declaration on Peace, Security and Stability in Central Africa, in which, *inter alia*, they reaffirmed their commitment to the fundamental principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and the charter of OAU, in particular, the sovereign equality of all States; non-interference in the internal affairs of States; respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State; the inviolability of boundaries inherited from the colonial period; the right to peace and security; and respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. They also reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen security in the subregion by combating acts of destabilization against any member State.

15. At a subsequent meeting held in Yaoundé on 12 and 13 March, the Ministers finalized the requested terms of reference and submitted them to the summit meeting of the Heads of State and Government held in Malabo on 25 June. At that summit, the Heads of State and Government decided to incorporate COPAX into the structure of ECCAS. Accordingly, they requested the Secretary-General of ECCAS to prepare the revision of the ECCAS Treaty and created a position of Executive Secretary for Peace, Security and Humanitarian Affairs and appointed its first Executive Secretary. They also decided to create a network of parliamentarians from the subregion to study the modalities of putting into place the subregional parliament created earlier.

16. In accordance with its programme of work for the reporting period, the Committee organized a high-level subregional seminar on the examination and implementation, in the Central African region, of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318). The seminar, held in Yaoundé from 19 to 21 July, was attended by government officials, parliamentarians and members of civil society from States members of the Standing Advisory Committee and representatives of entities of the United

Nations system and other international organizations. The seminar focused on the following seven themes: typology of the conflicts and crises in Central Africa; mechanisms and methods for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and crises; specific measures to prevent conflicts and insecurity in Central Africa; peacemaking and peacekeeping measures; peace-building measures; promotion of international humanitarian law; and promotion of good governance.

17. Participants welcomed the Secretary-General's report and noted that several of the decisions adopted by the Standing Advisory Committee within the framework of their activities mirrored the recommendations contained in it. Considerable time was devoted to consideration of the Secretary-General's recommendations related to peace-building measures. These included the re-establishment of institutions; the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants; the repatriation and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons; the promotion of democracy and good governance; the gradual reduction of the stock of small-calibre arms in circulation and the disarmament of the groups or individuals in possession of such weapons; the building of a culture of peace based upon sound democratic practices and principles, tolerance and peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups; and the mobilization of domestic and international resources for economic reconstruction and recovery.

18. Another area of grave concern to the participants was that of international humanitarian law. Participants condemned the massive and repeated violations of international humanitarian law perpetrated in the course of the numerous conflicts that had taken place in Central Africa, in particular, those against young people, children, women, civilians and refugees, as well as the staff of humanitarian organizations. In that connection, they emphasized the need to disseminate more widely the rules of international humanitarian law and to encourage respect for those rules, whether through the adoption of legislative measures, regulations and practical action to punish violations of international humanitarian law or through their incorporation into military and civilian training programmes. Participants also underlined the need for the Central African countries to step up their efforts to create conditions conducive to economic growth and sustainable human development as a means of preventing conflicts. At the conclusion of their deliberations, participants adopted a series of recommendations, which could be applied to promoting durable peace and sustainable development in the Central African region.

19. The Secretary-General strongly encourages all member countries of the Standing Advisory Committee to implement the recommendations on measures and principles contained in the report of the seminar (A/54/209-S/1999/859, annex) and calls upon all relevant departments/agencies, other international organizations and non-governmental organizations to assist the Committee in implementing those recommendations.

20. At their eleventh ministerial meeting, held in Yaoundé from 21 to 23 July, the Ministers expressed grave concern over the deterioration of the security situation in Angola. They endorsed the position adopted by the OAU Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Algiers, as well as various resolutions adopted by the Security Council on the situation in Angola. In that connection, the Ministers called for the urgent convening of a regional summit with a view to breaking the deadlock. The Ministers expressed satisfaction that efforts made in the framework of the Standing Advisory Committee to lift sanctions against Burundi had finally been successful. They appealed to the mediator in the Burundi peace process to invite all the parties to the conflict to participate in the Arusha peace process on Burundi. With regard to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Ministers welcomed the Lusaka ceasefire agreement and called on the other parties to sign the agreement and to respect its terms. They also appealed for a national dialogue among all Congolese people.

21. Expressing their concern over the grave situation created by the massive influx of refugees to Gabon resulting from ongoing wars in neighbouring countries, the Ministers called upon the United Nations and in particular the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to extend all possible assistance to Gabon, especially to reduce the danger created by the arrival of armed refugees in its territory. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the efforts undertaken by the Congolese authorities to restore peace and national reconciliation in their country. They appealed to all the people of the Congo to participate in the national dialogue initiated by President Denis Sassou Nguesso.

22. The Committee is scheduled to hold its twelfth ministerial meeting in N'Djamena from 27 to 30 October.

III. Programme and activities for 1999-2000

23. During the period 1999-2000, the Committee will continue to work on the implementation of important decisions taken during previous years and, in particular, the establishment of the mechanism for the promotion,

maintenance and consolidation of peace and security in the Central African region. It will also work towards developing new confidence-building measures aimed at addressing security issues in the region. Details of its future programme of work will be reflected in its report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

IV. Administrative and financial matters

24. Member States will recall that only the two ministerial meetings per year of the Standing Advisory Committee are financed from the regular budget, while its other activities are financed from voluntary contributions from Member States and governmental and non-governmental organizations, for which a trust fund was established in 1996. Owing to the decline in the resources of the trust fund, the Secretary-General strongly supports and reiterates the appeal made by the General Assembly to Member States, governmental and non-governmental organizations to make additional voluntary contributions to the fund in order to facilitate the effective implementation of the programme of work of the Standing Advisory Committee.

V. Conclusions and observations

25. Although the Central African region still remains Africa's most troubled region, member countries have come a long way in trying to promote peace and security in their subregion. The recent decision of Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the Central African region to incorporate COPAX into the structure of ECCAS is a clear indication of their commitment and determination to become guarantors of their regional security. In order to promote peace, security, stability and development, the leaders of the Central African countries have been drawing from practices and experiences of other subregions.

26. With the exception of the deterioration of the political and security situation in Angola, there appears to have been some improvement in the political and security situation in most countries of the Central African region. The signing of the ceasefire agreement in relation to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo gave new momentum to the peace process. Relations between Cameroon and Nigeria are improving, as demonstrated by a series of high-level contacts between the two countries during the reporting period.

27. In the period under review, member States of the Central African region have tried to tackle some of the most pressing issues affecting peace and security in their region. As stated above, they were instrumental in the lifting of sanctions imposed against Burundi. They have played an active role in encouraging dialogue among warring factions in those countries beset by conflict. Some of the leaders of these countries have acted as mediators. A number of informal meetings have been held to try to find viable solutions and ways of dealing with the critical situations in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The members of the Standing Advisory Committee have conducted their meetings and consultations in the most open and frank manner. They have not shied away from telling each other the truth when policies and actions by some members have had a negative effect on national and regional security.